



THE TRUMPET

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE UNIFORMED FIRE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION



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July 2025



President's Message

Primary Day

DC James Brosi

As most members already know Primary day was June 24th. Changes to the primary election over the last decade have impacted both voter turnout and the subsequent outcomes. The primary was moved from September to June to create a longer campaign period for the selected candidates prior to the general election. Early voting and ranked choice voting have also impacted the elections. 8 to 1 matching funds has allowed numerous candidates to not only enter the race but also remain monetarily competitive. This funding source has amplified the voice of many candidates who may have gone unnoticed by voters in the past. The impact of social media has further fueled that energy that motivated many young and first time voters. With that being said, most election outcomes stayed within the expectation based on message, reach of the candidate and network of legitimate supporters. Ironically the influence of money in this campaign was less powerful if not neutered against the highly motivated and organizational structure of the less traditional candidates and campaigns.

Historically the UFOA has never relied on large campaign contributions to move the needle in an election. We have always relied on our brand as level-headed moderates who stand with those who stand with us. Those who value the importance of a well-funded pension system, worker rights, and access to premium healthcare to name just a few. The manner in which we are perceived by the public is rooted in our countless positive interactions during times of need and it is that brand that allows us to punch well above our weight politically. We remain one of the few public sector unions that not only support our political allies but turn out in large numbers to show our gratitude as well as ensure the election/reelection of those who have fought on behalf of our active and retired members.

The 2025 primary brought out over 150 active and retired UFOA volunteers. The army of white jackets was once again noticed by our candidates and their competitors. So much so that one candidate we did not support approached one of our UFOA members and stated "I'm going to win this race and after I do I'm going to come see your union". That candidate not only won but quickly recognized the value of our support. While the entire board is grateful for those who turned out, we need to do more. In NYC elections the primary is usually the election. The majority of the races involve Democratic candidates who rarely face a competitive Republican in the general election. The UFOA cannot stress enough the importance of the primary and member turnout. So much so that we have even encouraged members who live in election districts where their party rarely has a competitive primary to switch party affiliation so they can vote in the primary. Too many members are registered to parties that rarely participate in competitive primaries. The negative impact on members is negligible. Members can still vote their party in the general election and the candidate they prefer. It is a reasonable trade off to have a larger voice in the election process.

Primary day saw a turn-out of over a million voters, an increase of about three hundred thousand. We backed candidates from both parties who valued workers protections and benefits. We experienced both wins and losses. The UFOA legislative committee will evaluate all winning candidates and determine if their values are our values to determine where we will show our support. In many cases the race was decided on primary day because in November, no competitive challenger will be on the ballot. For those races the only thing the UFOA can leverage is our name and the dedicated support of our members in the future.

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President's Message
continuation from Page 1

As we move through the dog days of the Summer the executive board, led by the legislative committee, will determine our best strategy moving forward. The mayoral race remains a top concern. The primary has produced a Democratic candidate in Assemblyman Zohran Mamdami. However, two other Democrats remain on the ballot as independents in addition to one Republican. This is a unique situation where multiple candidates with similar positions could draw votes from one another. How the crowded field will play out is, of course, yet to be determined. At this point the UFOA will continue speaking with all eligible candidates to determine their position on the FDNY and the collective bargained rights of our members. We believe it is our job to keep an open line of communication with all candidates while determining where our support might be most impactful.

I cannot stress enough how important all elections are to each and every UFOA member, both active and retired. Whether improving existing presumptive bills, extending look-backs for cancer and Parkinsons for retirees or fighting for 9/11 healthcare funding, it all goes through the legislative process. Whether a home rule at the City Council, a budgetary improvement at the state, or a federal legislation that protects 9/11 responders, they all require support of legislators that recognize the value of the work we do. Fortunately, we have worked on both sides of the aisle to accomplish these goals. Unfortunately, there is more work to be done.

The Constitutional Convention in 2017 illustrated that no benefit is immune to the political will of elected representatives. Since 2017, we have not only preserved those protections but we have improved existing benefits. I urge all active and retired members to continue to support our legislative agenda. While not all candidates appeal to all members, there is always one candidate or cause that should resonate with each and every one of you. You can stand on the sidelines and boo the ones fighting for you so long as you accept the fact that we all win or lose together. We are only as strong and loud as you enable us to be. If you mute our voice you also mute our ability to hold back the shifting tides of politics. Mayoral elections are one of the most impactful elections for all city agencies. The leadership changes directly affect each agency and the agenda moving forward even if not one law is passed. You can take this as a warning or a call to action. Either way you can't say you didn't know. The union organizes the strategy for protecting and improving your hard- earned benefits. The membership provides the energy and momentum that makes it possible. What are you going to do?

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The Importance of Updating Beneficiaries

By Capt Liam Guilfoyle



The New York City Fire Department has unfortunately dealt with a lot of death since 9/11. I know that seems like an obvious statement, but not all these deaths are a traditional line of duty, and the awareness is not at the same level as when the 5-5-5-5 signal is transmitted. The FDNY turns out to support our own like no other organization to honor its fallen brothers and sisters. We go above and beyond to take care of the families of our friends and colleagues at the worst time in their lives. We cook food, we visit hospitals, we bring levity into situations that many others would shy away from. We fill funeral homes and churches to make families pain that much less knowing that we will be there, and never forget them or their fallen loved one EVER. What we do for these families is incredible, yet we fall short in one of the most important aspects of protecting our friends and their families:

THE PAPERWORK THAT PROTECTS THEIR FAMILIES.

Far too often the unions must deal with the aftermath of our members not putting their personal and financial lives in proper order. Whether it is a failure to name a beneficiary or to change a beneficiary or to properly inform our loved ones of all the benefits that will come their way if god forbid something tragic happens it is often left to the union or to a colleague to sort through the mess that is left over when we fail to properly prepare for the possibility of our untimely demise.

There is a laundry list of things we need to have a beneficiary for in the FDNY. Many of our members fail to fill out the proper beneficiary forms. We have recently been holding back on sending out placards to members to contact those who have not filled out their beneficiary paperwork. I am sure you can imagine that some members are thankful, and some are less than pleased. We also put together individual packages for those members who signed up for our delegates' seminar that had not completed all their forms. The UFOA has been trying to protect its members from themselves as much as possible in truth to avoid so many of the very uncomfortable conversations we have faced over the past nine years that I have been on this board.

To start with, explaining to a wife that their husband left his parents, siblings or our favorite his ex-wife as the beneficiary on their life insurance policy is awkward to say the very least. In some instances, if your parents and your spouse have a great relationship that may be an easy conversation but leaving that to chance is not what you want to do to your grieving loved one. We are begging you to please call or email us to make sure your paperwork is in proper order.

The list of benefits we have that need a beneficiary include:

- Deferred Compensation Plan 457
(go to website nyc.gov/deferredcomp)
- 401k Plan (go to website)
- UFOA Life Insurance Policy 1
(call union 212-293-9300)
- UFOA Life Insurance Policy 2
(call union 212-293-9300)
- UFOA Annuity Fund (call union 212-293-9300)
- UFOA Critical Illness Policy (call union 212-293-9300)
- Pension “Designation of Life Insurance”
(call FPF 929-436-0099)
- ESS Beneficiary (Final Paycheck)
(go to website nyc.gov/ess)
- Pension “Designation of Beneficiary of Death Benefits”
(call FPF at 929-436-0099)

Next

General Membership Meeting

*****Day Meeting*****

September 18th, 2025

October 9th, 2025

Thank you for your participation on Primary Day

City Council Member Eric Dinowitz

LT PATRICK BARRY (RETIRED)
BC WILLIAM CARROLL (ACTIVE)
CAPT RICHARD CUDDEN (ACTIVE)
LT RICHARD DAVAN (ACTIVE)
CAPT PAUL DeLEO (ACTIVE)
LT JOHN DRUMM (RETIRED)
LT PAUL EGAN (ACTIVE)
CAPT MICHAEL FOTI (ACTIVE)
CAPT MICHAEL GAFFNEY (ACTIVE)
BC JAMES JACOBS (RETIRED)
CAPT ROBERT KEATING (RETIRED)
LT DANIEL LIGARZEWSKI (ACTIVE)
LT CHARLES MARSHALL (ACTIVE)
BC BRIAN McDADE (ACTIVE)
BC SEAN MICHAEL (ACTIVE)
CAPT DANIEL O'CONNELL (ACTIVE)
DC MICHAEL RAPPE (RETIRED)
LT JOSEPH ROEMER (RETIRED)
DC JAMES SANGIAMO (ACTIVE)
DC JOHN SULLIVAN (RETIRED)
BC MICHAEL TREANOR (ACTIVE)

Candidate Virginia Maloney

BC PETER ARCHER (ACTIVE)
CAPT PAUL COHN (ACTIVE)
BC JAMES CORCORAN (ACTIVE)
BC MICHAEL DOWLING (ACTIVE)
CAPT JAMES DUFFY (RETIRED)
CAPT GEORGE FARINACCI (ACTIVE)
CAPT BRENDAN HAGAN (ACTIVE)
DC THOMAS HAUGHNEY (ACTIVE)
CAPT BRIAN JABLONSKI (ACTIVE)
SFM BRIAN KREBS (ACTIVE)
BC PHILIP MARINO (ACTIVE)
BC DANIEL MAYE (ACTIVE)
CAPT DANIEL McGINN (ACTIVE)
CAPT PHILIP POLEMENI (ACTIVE)
DC THOMAS REILLY (ACTIVE)
CAPT BARAK SOMMER (ACTIVE)
BC DENIS SWEENEY (ACTIVE)
CAPT MICHAEL TRACEY (ACTIVE)
BC PATRICK WILLIAMS (ACTIVE)

Candidate Dermot Smyth

DC MICHAEL BARVELS (ACTIVE)
LT JASON BLACKBURN (ACTIVE)
BC EDWARD BOLES (ACTIVE)
LT JOHN BREEN (ACTIVE)
LT JOSEPH CAMASTRO (ACTIVE)
CAPT JOSEPH CANALE (ACTIVE)
LT STEPHEN CARBONE (RETIRED)
LT DANIEL FITZSIMMONS (RETIRED)
BC THOMAS FRIZALONE (ACTIVE)
CAPT LIAM GUILFOYLE (ACTIVE)
LT BRIAN HENNELLY (ACTIVE)
CAPT SEAN HENNELLY (ACTIVE)
BC WAYMAN IRIARTE (RETIRED)
LT CHRISTOPHER JENSEN (ACTIVE)
CAPT KEVIN JUDSON (ACTIVE)
CAPT MICHAEL KING (RETIRED)
BC BARRY LeGUERNIC (ACTIVE)
DC JOSEPH LOFTUS (ACTIVE)
CAPT DANIEL McADAMS (ACTIVE)
CAPT WILLIAM McCARTHY
LT KEVIN McCUTCHAN (RETIRED)
LT MICHAEL McGEVNA (RETIRED)
LT FRANCIS MORIARTY (ACTIVE)
LT ROBERT MUNGIGUERRA
CAPT TIMOTHY MURPHY (ACTIVE)
LT ANTHONY MUSSORFITI
LT JOHN NOLAN (RETIRED)
LT DANIEL O'CONNOR (RETIRED)
LT TIMOTHY O'CONNOR (RETIRED)
BC RYAN PAHOLEK (ACTIVE)
BC THOMAS REGAN (ACTIVE)
BC LEONARD ROE (ACTIVE)
LT RICHARD SCOTT (ACTIVE)
CAPT JAMES SICILIAN (ACTIVE)
CAPT MICHAEL SMITHWICK
LT JAMES VELLA (RETIRED)
CAPT GERARD WALSH (ACTIVE)
CAPT JOSEPH WALSH (RETIRED)
CAPT THOMAS WATSON (ACTIVE)
BC KEVIN WHITE (ACTIVE)
CAPT DAVID WIRTA (ACTIVE)
DC GERALD WREN (RETIRED)
BC JOHN ZOLLNER (ACTIVE)

City Council Member Kamila Hanks

LT GIANCARLO ANDRIANO (ACTIVE)
BC TIMOTHY BENNETT (ACTIVE)
CAPT JOHN BURKE (RETIRED)
CAPT GERARD CHIPURA (RETIRED)
LT PAUL CINQUEMANI (RETIRED)
CAPT THOMAS COLEMAN (RETIRED)
LT JOSEPH DARETANY (ACTIVE)
BC JOHN DUNNE (RETIRED)
CAPT LAWRENCE GARDA (ACTIVE)
LT JEFFREY HUEY (ACTIVE)
BC DANIEL KEANE (ACTIVE)
LT JAMES LANGAN (RETIRED)
BC JOHN LEVEROCK (ACTIVE)
BC WILLIAM LILLEY (ACTIVE)
BC EDWARD O'CONNOR (RETIRED)
BC WILLIAM SIMPSON (ACTIVE)
LT JOHN STRINGILE (RETIRED)
LT JOSEPH TORRILLO (RETIRED)
CAPT ROBERT WIDENER (ACTIVE)
CAPT JAMES WINTERS (ACTIVE)

City Council Member Inna Vernikov

CAPT MICHAEL DODA (ACTIVE)
LT WILLIAM DOWNEY (ACTIVE)
CAPT ALEXANDER HAGAN (RETIRED)
CAPT KIERAN HOWLIN (ACTIVE)
LT ERIK LAHODA (RETIRED)
LT EDWARD LONG (ACTIVE)
CAPT GREGORY McGUINNESS (ACTIVE)
LT JOHN MILITANO (ACTIVE)
LT ROBERT ORLOFF (RETIRED)
LT ROBERT PAOLILLO (ACTIVE)
CAPT THOMAS RICHES (ACTIVE)
BC DANIEL SAALFRANK (ACTIVE)
CAPT BRIAN TOOMEY (ACTIVE)
CAPT PATRICK WARD (ACTIVE)

UFOA Political Action – Primary Election 2025



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President
Michael B. Murphy
FDNY (Ret.)

Thank You

By Capt Jason Rigoli



My tenure as a Captain Trustee on the UFOA board officially ended on July 1st. It is bittersweet as I have enjoyed executing the mission and goals of the UFOA for the members we serve. Our collective goal as a member of this department, which is steeped in honor and tradition, is to protect the lives and property of the citizens of NYC. It has been an honor to safeguard the men and women who provide that service 365 days a year, 24 hours a day.

As I move on to the next phase of my career, I look back and reflect on my experiences of being a member of this executive board. I joined the board as a member who understood the importance of the protection that the UFOA provided its members, but to say that there is a considerable learning curve would be an understatement. I hate to say it, but I was naive about how hard the board works behind the scenes to protect the membership, including pensions, benefits, healthcare, safety, and other essential aspects of your well-being. I was fortunate enough to have board members with "time on the board" to guide me and share their knowledge to navigate the many interactions between management and labor. It has been a fascinating journey learning about the behind-the-scenes work done with politicians and leadership, both at the city and national Levels, negotiating with the membership's best interest in mind. We meet regularly with politicians and staff members from HQ. During these meetings, we discuss legislative changes that we seek to implement to benefit our membership, as well as changes in procedures and policies that our Staff Chiefs are considering. I understand that some of the decisions made by the board are not always met with joy by the membership. Still, you should realize that there is thorough discussion, sometimes heated by the board, and a vote is taken for every decision that will affect the membership. It is with the well-being of the membership that these decisions are made.

A crucial aspect of your membership is your regular involvement. We understand that you all have busy lives and family commitments, and we want to express our sincere appreciation for your efforts to make regular involvement a priority. We know it's not always easy, but your active participation is not only essential to the success of our Union, but it's also a testament to your dedication and commitment. Your presence at our meetings and events is not just a formality; it's a vital part of our Union's operations.

The monthly meetings are well attended during contract negotiations. You make the time to be there because you all think it is important, and you're right. Your presence and active participation in general membership meetings give the Executive Board a chance to find out what is happening in the field and inform the membership of our political activities and clarify what we have been working on. Your involvement is not just a formality; it's a powerful demonstration of your influence and the strength of our Union.

We need membership to get involved to continue being successful at these meetings. We need you to be present when we ask you to participate in political actions and special events. Your participation in these events is not just a show of support; it's a powerful statement of our Union's strength and influence. We depend on our friends in the legislature to help us when we need them, and we need them to know they can count on us when asked. If we have poor participation when we ask for help, what kind of help do you think we will receive when we ask? We don't expect every member to be available for every event, but we do expect all members to make an effort to attend a few events each year.

I would like to conclude by letting the membership know that you are in great hands with the current executive board and should be proud that they represent you. Please be active and support them. Remember always that our strength lies in our unity. By standing together and supporting each other, we can achieve our collective Goals. Thank you all for allowing me to represent you, it has been a pleasure.

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Comp Time Lawsuit

BC Jack Spillane



Questions Regarding the Comp Time Lawsuit

Battalion Chief Comp Time and the National Fair Labor Standard Act

On June 11, 2025, the UFOA in partnership with IAFF General Counsel's Office filed a lawsuit in federal court against the City of New York and the FDNY. The lawsuit seeks overtime wages under the Fair Labor Standards Act ("FLSA") for UFOA members who worked in the role of Battalion Chief at any time from June 11, 2022 through the present. Our goal in filing this lawsuit is to bring much needed change to the current comp-time system and ensure that all UFOA members are properly compensated for overtime-related shifts.

Since the announcement of the UFOA comp time lawsuit, the office has been flooded with calls from the membership. The following are frequently asked questions. Hopefully you find them informative.

Why can't Chiefs use their comp time?

An officer taking comp in the field creates a vacancy that can only be filled by a Captain working as an Acting Battalion Chief. As more Battalion Chiefs take comp time, more ABCs are required to fill the void. The Department loses valuable leadership and experience at operations when too many ABCs are working in the field. In response to this safety issue, the Department has limited the amount of ABCs working at one time in the field. As a result, Chiefs working in the field are being denied the use of comp time that they have rightfully earned.

What has been the result of members being unable to use their comp time?

The inability of our members to use comp time has resulted in them banking a high number of hours that they will never be able to use. Not only has comp time off been limited in the field, the city has capped the number of hours that a member can use before retirement to one year. The UFOA has many members who have banked more than one year worth of comp time with the expectation of using every hour of that time during the lead up to their retirements who are now forced to retire with an excess of time that they will never be able to use. We find this situation unacceptable. Our members do not work for free.

Why is June 11, 2022 the lookback date?

Class action lawsuits are permitted to look back three years from the date the lawsuit was filed to gather plaintiffs. Our suit was filed June 11, 2025 making June 11, 2022 our look back date.

Why is this lawsuit limited to Battalion Chiefs? Why aren't Deputy Chiefs included?

The FLSA does not allow overtime to be paid to officers who exclusively perform supervisory duties. The UFOA believes the work that battalion chiefs perform is within a tactical capacity on the fire ground as all hands chief, floor above chief, safety chief, etc. The Deputy Chief has more of a supervisory role and therefore does not meet the criteria.

Do I have to sign up for the lawsuit to get a benefit?

In order to receive a monetary benefit, you must be part of the lawsuit. Any policy change created as a result of the lawsuit will be for all BCs regardless of their status regarding the lawsuit. Any payments received by our members will be the result of a favorable finding by the court. If there is a payout, the court will determine the amount and the structure.

How do I know if I am eligible for participation?

A member can participate in the lawsuit if you meet the following profile:

1. Current or former employee of the FDNY,
2. Held the title of Battalion Chief during the period of June 11, 2022 through the present, and
3. Worked overtime-related shifts and received comp time payment for that work

Do I have to pay out of pocket for the lawyers?

No, the lawyers are taking this case on a contingency-fee basis which means that they will be paid a fee if a monetary award is part of the judgement. Their fee will be a percentage of the total award amount with the remainder going to the members who signed onto the lawsuit.

How do I join the lawsuit?

If you meet all the criteria listed in the 3 bullet points above, you are eligible to sign onto the lawsuit. The process to join will involve filling out an opt-in form and retaining Mooney, Green, Saindon, Murphy & Welch, P.C. ("Mooney Green") as your legal counsel. The law firm of Mooney Green serves as General Counsel for the IAFF. If you would like to sign up or are interested in hearing more, please email attorney Sammy Sugiura at ssugiura@mooneygreen.com.

The executive board believes this is a worthwhile endeavour for our membership. Over the last 25 years, the Department has been a leading advocate for the modernization firefighting tactics and equipment. The same should be true for fire officer compensation. The comp time system is antiquated and should be changed to reflect what the department looks like in 2025.

Review of Term

By BC Sean Michael



I hope this article finds you well and enjoying some summer fun. (PSA: Wear sunblock and go to a good dermatologist for a thorough screening, our members have been diagnosed with precancerous and cancerous skin issues at an alarming rate.) As some of you may know, I am wrapping up my first three-year term as a Chiefs' Representative. I will be continuing in this role for a second term, having run unopposed. It's an honor to represent the Chief officers and each one of you. I'm committed to work for you and advocate for your best interests.

When I first stepped into this role, I thought I knew what the job entailed but the position is a never-ending learning curve. But one thing is crystal clear to me: my job is to enhance the well-being of our active and retired members, with a strong focus on retirement with health and safety being a large component. Over the past three years, as a union we have made significant strides, and I want to continue advocating for devoting resources and working on initiatives for our membership.

One of my focuses has been on overseeing and expanding our health and safety screenings. We all know the unique risks associated with our profession, and proactive health management is vital. I've been working to ensure that our members, both active and retired, have access to comprehensive screenings that can detect potential health issues early. This isn't just about checking boxes; it's about providing peace of mind and, in many cases, life-saving early detection.

The wellness screening program with retired Lieutenant/PA Rob Brown and his staff at NY Firefighters' Heart and Lung, is designed to identify a wide array of health conditions. As you know, the program is offered to you with absolutely zero out-of-pocket expenses, with any costs exceeding your existing insurance coverage fully grant covered. This screening program includes health assessments such as cardiac and pulmonary screenings, thyroid checks, dermatological skin checks, stress tests, and a general medical consultation. An optional advanced blood cancer screening via a blood draw is also available for a small co-pay, with results evaluated by the program.

I want to emphasize the importance of cardiac screening. We've seen a recent uptick in serious cardiac events and strokes among our members, including younger officers. Our career, with its inherent stressors and exposures, unfortunately puts us at a higher risk for cardiovascular issues. While no screening is perfect, being proactive is crucial. If you have a family history or personal history of cardiac issues, it is important that you get thoroughly screened by your own cardiologist. For those with a higher risk, consider discussing advanced screenings, including CT scans with contrast, with your doctor. Early detection and intervention can make a life-changing difference.

The power of preventative care cannot be overstated. Early detection of health issues can significantly improve treatment outcomes, and our program has already yielded tangible results. Every month, they have detected serious heart rhythm disorders, coronary artery disease, cancer hypertension and obstructive sleep apnea. These conditions and diseases were detected many times at stages where treatment is often most effective. These results underscore the important role this program plays in proactively safeguarding our members' health and potentially saving lives through early detection and intervention. Call and book your appointment they are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. Please call (516) 441-7614 or send an email to fdnyschedulingrbpa@gmail.com.

Beyond our physical well-being, we must also prioritize our mental well-being. The stresses of balancing our personal lives and our job are unique and can take a significant toll. It's vital that we take care of ourselves and look out for our fellow brother and sister fire officers. I urge you to take advantage of the care and referrals that the FDNY Counseling Services Unit has to offer, not just for ourselves, but also for our family members who might need support. Seeking help for mental health is a sign of strength, not weakness, and these resources are there to support all of us.

Also please know, we are working to improve our communication systems with all of you. Having immediate access to information is crucial. That's why we are exploring a complete makeover and relaunch of our UFOA website! This will be an invaluable tool for keeping our members updated on everything happening within the union. Imagine easy access to important forms, resources, news, and events, mobile friendly all at your fingertips. We want to create a central hub where you can quickly find what you need, ensuring you stay connected and informed about all the work the UFOA is doing on your behalf.

Please remember that your union is here for you every step of the way. As one of your pension representatives, I want to emphasize that if you're starting your retirement journey, have questions about injuries or illnesses affecting your future health, or need assistance with a possible disability retirement, please don't hesitate to reach out. The importance of a properly filled out CD72 cannot be overstated; consult the union for assistance with this crucial document. And if you're a retired member facing any health issues, especially concerning WTC reclassification, please contact us. We are here to guide you through these complex processes and ensure you receive the support and benefits you deserve.

As I move into this second term, I look forward to continuing working for all of our membership. Please know it's never a bother to receive a call, text or email from a member, active or retired. Your feedback is invaluable, so please don't hesitate to reach out with your thoughts, concerns, or suggestions.

Thank you for reading this article. I hope it has provided you with some insights and useful information. Please remember to take care of yourself and prioritize preventative health care. If I can be of any help, please contact me at Smichael@ufoa.org or call me directly at (212) 292-1555.



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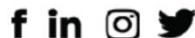
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Understanding Your Optical Health Benefit

By Lt Paul Egan



Our focus, as your union representatives, is the wages, benefits and working conditions of the membership. When it comes to maintaining overall health, vision care is often overlooked until a problem arises. However, regular eye exams and access to quality eyewear are essential components of a healthy lifestyle. The Family Protection Plan offers active and retired members and their dependents one eye exam and one pair of glasses during the one-year benefit period which is available for the calendar year from January 1st through December 31st.

There are two in-network providers, Comprehensive Professional Systems (CPS) and General Vision Services. To confirm eligibility, call either service, identify yourself as a Local 854 UFOA member and the following:

- Last 4 digits of social
- Name
- Date of birth

If the person using the benefit is a dependent, they must provide the same information.

To obtain a list of the participating providers online go to www.cpsoptical.com (212) 675-5745 and www.generalvision.com (212)729-5300.

(Please note that for GVS website you will need the group number which is 7741).

Members have the option of using a participating provider or an out-of-network provider and submitting a claim form for reimbursement. Filing for reimbursement consist of submitting an itemized paid receipt and reimbursement application via email to maribel@cpsoptical.com or mail to CPS Optical 11 Hanover Square 8th Floor New York, NY 10005. The receipt must include patient name, date of service, services provided, amounts paid, and the above-mentioned eligibility identifiers on all documents. The reimbursement rate is a maximum of \$100.

Understanding the optical insurance benefits provided through the UFOA is key to making the most of your coverage. These benefits are designed to support your vision health while reducing out-of-pocket costs. By staying informed and taking full advantage of what's offered, you can protect your eyesight and your wallet.

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Washington Update: IAFF Priorities on Capitol Hill

By Lt Brian Concannon with Evan Davis, Director of Government Affairs IAFF



Congress has started the summer with a bang, and Republicans are trying to move President Trump's major priorities. The IAFF is working to ensure fire fighters' needs stay in focus as key bills are drafted and passed. All IAFF members are encouraged to log in to the IAFF Advocacy Center (www.iaff.org/advocacy-center) to easily urge their Members of Congress to support key fire service initiatives.

At the top of Congress' agenda was the Reconciliation Bill (H.R. 1). Dubbed the "One Big Beautiful Bill" by its proponents, this wide-ranging legislation takes advantage of special procedural rules that prevent Senate Democrats from using a filibuster to stop the bill. The bill was signed on July 4. The IAFF worked to defend and expand key tax-related provisions in the bill, including raising the cap on state and local tax (SALT) deductions (which increased four-fold), reducing income taxes on overtime earnings (which were unfortunately capped), and providing tax relief for retirees. It has retained critical tax benefits for fire fighters. The IAFF was engaged in the process and in daily contact with key legislators to make sure Congress remembers the needs of first responders in passing the legislation.

In addition to H.R.1, the IAFF has been working with Congress to stress the critical importance of passing the 9/11 Responder and Survivor Health Funding Correction Act (H.R. 1410/S. 739), which Representative Andrew Garbarino (R-NY), Representative Jerry Nadler (D-NY), and Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) introduced earlier this year. This legislation would provide key funding improvements for the World Trade Center Health Monitoring Program to prevent a funding shortfall. IAFF and UFOA members have repeatedly met with Members of Congress this year to make sure they address this issue in advance of looming fiscal deadlines for the program in Fiscal Year 2028. The bill has growing bipartisan support from Members of Congress nationwide, and we are currently working to include it in

the annual defense authorization bill, which Congress will develop later this year.

Fighting cancer in the fire service also remains a top priority. In May, the Senate Judiciary Committee unanimously approved the Honoring Our Fallen Heroes Act (S. 237/H.R. 1269), which would allow survivors of fire fighters who succumb to occupational cancer to qualify for death benefits under the Public Safety Officers Benefits program. This bill has garnered broad bipartisan support in the House and Senate, and we are working all angles to get it passed later this year. The IAFF is also supporting the PFAS Alternatives Act (H.R. 3184), which would establish a grant program to lead research and development of PFAS-free, next-generation turnout gear. This is a critical step in our efforts to eliminate cancer from the fire service. The IAFF is urging all Members of Congress to cosponsor this bill and bring this vital research and development work to fruition.

The IAFF will continue working with Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle to ensure fire fighters are at the table and are included in any legislation that Congress advances. The UFOA's members can play an important role in this work by contacting their members of Congress and urging them to ensure that IAFF priorities are also Congressional priorities.

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SPECIALISTS



Layoffs

By Capt Michael Tracey



On June 2 of this year, a group of retired firefighters met at the Plattduetsche out in Long Island. While the beer hall often hosts FDNY events, this group did not share the common bonds of a firehouse, an ethnicity, or an athletic team. Rather, what brought this group together was the 50th anniversary of a shared experience that most of us have only heard tales of in kitchens. This was a gathering of the men who were laid off due to the fiscal crisis of the mid 70's. Of the 911 firefighters (no, the number is not a typo) who were laid off, more than half have survived. A list shows about 350 are still living in New York, and about 50 of them met last month to celebrate the 50th anniversary to reminisce about their experience getting laid off and perhaps share some choice words towards the men who caused it. This article is going to be a (extremely) condensed history of the layoffs in honor of the brothers' reunion this June.

The layoffs were the result of a financial deterioration that was years in the making in New York. For years the city had invested in education, infrastructure, and a growing city workforce. As the quality of life in the city deteriorated and more of its high earning residents (and employers) fled to other areas, a consistent budget shortfall began to be filled with municipal bonds and assistance from Albany and D.C. By 1975, the banks had had enough- they refused to buy municipal bonds that the city needed to raise capital. To avoid an almost immediate bankruptcy, then Governor Carey established the Municipal Assistance Corporation aka "Big MAC"- the predecessor to the emergency financial control board- consisting mostly of representatives from banks and ushering in an era of external control over New York City's finances. These bankers made the purchasing of bonds contingent on city government making large reductions in employment and salaries. While Mayor Beame had froze hiring and attempted a smaller layoff earlier in the year, a layoff of 40,000 employees, amongst whom included 2000 firefighters, was planned for the beginning of the fiscal year on July 1.

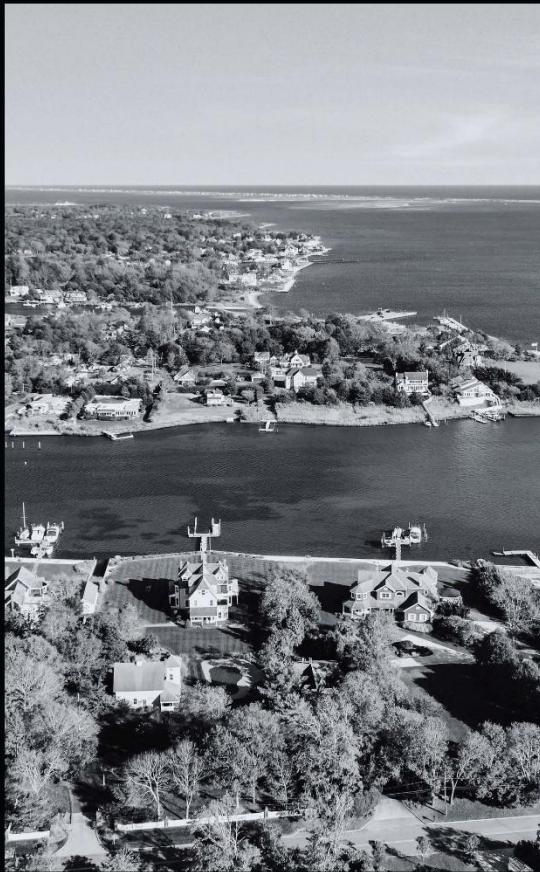
After a few days of widespread firehouse closings and 2000 layoffs, the number was reduced to 911 thanks to fierce protests from the UFOA/UFA, citizen groups, politicians, and of course a number of serious fires to which response was heavily delayed. A misconception of the crisis is that only junior guys were shown their pink slip- according to Al Hagan (who very briefly drove a city bus), you needed 7

years to avoid losing the job. While firefighters and officers restricted their protest activity to demonstrations at headquarters and outside of shuddered firehouses, the rank and files of our union brothers in Sanitation and the NYPD were not quite as restrained: Sanitation workers started a wildcat strike (which I forgot to mention in my article on wildcats last issue) and 500 laid off cops shut down the Brooklyn Bridge, allegedly letting air out of car tires. A few weeks later laid off doctors and nurses shut the bridge down as well.

Making matters worse, firehouses were already strained. Commissioner John O'Hagan (who had become Chief of Department at the ripe old age of 39 and forced to wait until age 48 to become Commish) had worked with the infamous RAND thinktank in 1968 to contract a study which concluded firehouses could be closed throughout the city without an affect on response times or the time needed to stretch a line. The study lead to the closure of over 20 firehouses in low socio-economic areas as residents were fleeing for areas outside of the city. O'Hagan himself once famously proclaimed that he could run the job with 7,500 members, a claim I suggested to Al was disingenuous (Al chose different language to describe it). Even before the layoffs- which led to additional firehouse closures- the men were being stretched thin with increasing fire duty and decreased staffing.

Later in 1975, a coalition of public unions led by MLC president Victor Gotbaum struck a deal with the city to forego a 6% raise and to use their pension funds to buy city bonds, leading many of their employees to be rehired. Police and firefighter unions refused the deal, as in the months running up to the layoffs they had given up personal leave days only to see the brothers let go anyway. It would take years to rehire all of them: The first group were rehired in December of 1975 under federal employment training legislation, then another 100 rehired after a HUD grant in February of 1976, and yet 250 more rehired in June of 1976 after larger than anticipated retirements. By the end of 1976 all but 83 of the firefighters were rehired, and the rest would be welcomed back early in 1977.

It would take years for New York City to rebuild its infrastructure. Some victims of the fiscal crisis would never return- CUNY charging tuition, for instance, led to the decline of an institution that was one of the most selective in the country, and declining investments in public safety led to the war years of the late 70's and increasing crime that would hobble the city for years. Additionally, the playbook of big MAC and the EFCB would be reused in subsequent years to close firehouses and demand productivity increases that would jeopardize lives. But another tradition passed down was our ability to fight against these assaults on labor; it is no accident that two UFOA presidents (Both Jack O'Donnell and Al himself) were laid off. Our union today is built on the shoulders of this tradition, and the UFOA thanks the brothers and sisters before us.



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JOHN BERGIN
JOHN BIAGINI
DANIEL BIVONA
STEPHEN BOYLE
VINCENT CAPOSIO
JULIAN CARNEY
PATRICK CASSERLY
DANIEL CILUFFO
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JOSEPH COLELLA
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RICHARD DIPADOVA
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BRIAN SWORDS
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RAYMOND TSENG
PATRICK TULLEY
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ANTHONY VIVERITO
JUSTIN WALTZ
ERIK WIEBER
JOSHUA WILLIS
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AMY HAO

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MICHELE FITZSIMMONS
BRIAN GOMOKA
PATRICK GORMAN
BRIAN OTT
ROBERT PAVIS
RICHARD QUENZER
JOSHUA SMITH

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RYAN BRITO
BRYAN COWAN
CHRISTOPHER DOSSANTOS
MATTHEW GENOVESE
JAMES GERVASI
TIMOTHY HOGAN
JONATHAN KAPPEL
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IAN BRENNAN
BRYAN FEALY
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RETIREMENTS

NAME	DATE	COMMAND	NAME	DATE	COMMAND
SFM GEORGE AGUIRRE	2025-02-27	BFI	CAPT PETER P KEARNEY	2025-02-27	DIVISION 003
CAPT JAMES P BACENET	2025-03-15	ENGINE 236	LT ANDREW KELLY	2025-02-27	BATTALION 041
CAPT JOHN M BAKER	2025-02-27	LADDER 081	CAPT MICHAEL D KIMBALL	2025-01-30	ENGINE 153
LT SCOTT D BATTERBERRY	2025-03-26	ENGINE 082	LT ERIK KNUDSEN	2025-02-27	LADDER 166
LT JOSEPH V BELTRANI	2025-01-30	SQUAD 061	LT THOMAS S LANE	2025-03-23	ENGINE 315
CAPT RICHARD A BENDIX	2025-03-21	ENGINE 024	BC JOSEPH LAURIA	2025-03-05	BATTALION 045
LT VINCENT BIONDO	2025-02-27	BATTALION 049	CAPT KENNETH G MARTIN	2025-03-10	ENGINE 093
CAPT COLM J BRENNAN	2025-03-01	MARINE	BC JAMES O McMORROW	2025-03-29	BATTALION 027
CAPT JOHN R BURKE	2025-01-30	ENGINE 152	LT RICHARD MENDEZ	2025-03-27	ENGINE 238
LT JAMES P CADDIGAN	2025-03-27	LADDER 038	CAPT RONALD D METZ	2025-02-27	LADDER 101
LT CHRISTIAN G CHILDS	2025-01-30	MARINE 009	LT WILLIAM MIRTH	2025-03-03	ENGINE 331
CAPT CRAIG K CRICHLLOW	2025-01-30	LADDER 027	LT THOMAS M MOORE	2025-03-03	ENGINE 293
LT SEAN F DEANS	2025-03-15	ENGINE 015	LT GERARD A MULLANEY	2025-03-27	ENGINE 045
LT DOUGLAS J DeMATTEO	2025-01-09	ENGINE 015	CAPT MICHAEL J MULVIHILL	2025-03-07	ENGINE 045
LT DONALD A DePIERRO	2025-02-27	ENGINE 039	LT MATTHEW J MUMBACH	2025-03-27	LADDER 041
LT PATRICK W DONAGHY	2025-01-05	LADDER 036	CAPT EUGENE P O'DONNELL	2025-02-26	ENGINE 268
SFM MATTHEW D DONNELLY	2025-02-27	BFI	LT JASON W REILLY	2025-01-17	LADDER 030
LT MARK A DONOHUE	2025-03-15	ENGINE 285	CAPT WILLIAM RIVERA	2025-02-03	ENGINE 034
LT JOSEF B FISCHER	2025-02-04	LADDER 102	CAPT RAYMUND R ROSICKI JR	2025-02-27	DIVISION 008
BC RICHARD E FLOOD	2025-02-20	BATTALION 021	CAPT FREDERICK G SAPORITO	2025-02-27	SQUAD 270
CAPT RICHARD M GALEAZZI	2025-02-06	ENGINE 255	CAPT FRANK R SCADUTO	2025-01-30	ENGINE 151
LT SALVATORE GIUSTINO	2025-01-27	BATTALION 004	LT THOMAS S SCHWEIZER	2025-01-11	LADDER 076
DC MICHAEL GROGAN	2025-03-25	DIVISION 015	BC MARTIN SCIALPI	2025-03-04	BATTALION 044
SFM ANTHONY M HENRY	2025-03-17	BFI	LT ANTHONY SUTERA	2025-03-31	ENGINE 163
LT PAUL R JAMIN	2025-02-27	LADDER 174	CAPT NAIM VATA	2025-02-12	LADDER 008
LT DANIEL G JOYCE	2025-02-27	LADDER 158	LT JOSEPH J VUOTTO JR	2025-02-27	ENGINE 076
			CAPT GARY A WEINHOFER	2025-02-10	LADDER 162

IN MEMORIAM

NAME	DOD	RET DATE	COMMAND
LT WILLIAM E BARRETT	2025-01-17	1997-11-17	LADDER 106
DC JAMES A BAUMAN	2025-03-16	1994-04-30	DIVISION 007
CAPT FRED W BRUNO SR	2025-03-16	1983-11-27	LADDER 008
CAPT BRUCE V BUNEO	2025-01-27	1997-01-21	ENGINE 156
BC FRANCESCO S CARINO	2025-03-31	1993-10-01	BATTALION 033
LT JOSEPH P CHOQUETTE	2025-02-12	2000-08-31	LADDER 087
LT ANDREW F CLARKE	2025-01-31	1993-09-05	ENGINE 052
BC JOSEPH F COLASURDO	2025-02-09	1988-03-25	BATTALION 052
BC DENNIS J COLLOPY	2025-01-30	2003-01-27	BATTALION 011
CAPT THOMAS J CULKIN	2025-01-15	1993-08-31	ENGINE 263
CAPT GERALD J CULLEN	2025-01-16	1993-12-20	ENGINE 286
CAPT VINCENT J D'ALESSANDRO	2025-03-14	1996-06-01	DIVISION 004
CAPT NICHOLAS P DeLUCA	2025-02-02	1990-01-10	DIVISION 007
LT ROBERT J DOMBO	2025-01-19	1980-10-10	ENGINE 302
CAPT MILTON R FRANKLIN	2025-01-23	1993-12-14	ENGINE 276
LT JOHN T GAIDIS	2025-01-28	1991-07-28	ENGINE 258
CAPT WILLIAM F GATES	2025-02-09	1993-10-31	ENGINE 156
LT EUGENE J HAYES	2025-03-07	1993-12-13	ENGINE 043
BC ROLAND T HOFFELDER	2025-03-25	1984-11-15	BATTALION 050
BC ARTHUR J KELLY	2025-01-29	1997-05-10	
BC EUGENE T KELTY JR	2025-03-16	2018-07-11	BATTALION 010
SFM LESTER LAYNE	2025-01-08	2012-10-25	HOPBAS
CAPT DOUGLAS R LeMAITRE	2025-03-24	1990-07-01	
BC EDWARD J LINTZ	2025-01-18	2003-01-02	BATTALION 013
CAPT WILLIAM A MEURER	2025-03-04	1995-03-25	ENGINE 293
CAPT JOSEPH P MULLIGAN	2025-03-26	2000-01-10	LADDER 111
LT JOHN A NELSON	2025-03-15	1999-08-14	
LT DONALD V O'LEARY	2025-01-11	1989-11-01	LADDER 151
BC CHRISTOPHER B REARER	2025-01-14	2022-08-15	BATTALION 027
LT KEVIN J REIDY	2025-03-19	1984-07-18	
CAPT JOSEPH F RUTHERFORD	2025-02-18	1987-07-03	ENGINE 316
CAPT PETER V RYAN	2025-03-03	1981-08-10	
LT FREDRICK K SCHLUECK	2025-03-13	1995-08-30	ENGINE 13
LT ALEXANDER W SHEEN	2025-01-11	1976-09-25	BATTALION 57
LT CHARLES E SHERIDAN	2025-01-14	1996-05-23	ENGINE 063
LT ROBERT A SMILLIE	2025-02-21	2001-12-01	ENGINE 317
LT JAMES T SWEENEY	2025-03-06	2002-05-11	LADDER 151
LT JOHN M SZCZECH	2025-02-17	2020-03-26	BATTALION 028
LT FREDERICK M WEBER	2025-01-20	1984-07-02	ENGINE 294
LT THOMAS E WHITE	2025-01-19	1984-05-24	

Uniformed Fire Officers Association

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